Research (ICAR) to monitor the progress of sowing operations and provide technical advice to the States through periodic telephonic discussions and video-conferences/meetings. Contingency plans suitable to specific agro climatic conditions have been prepared, which include replacement of main crop with alternate crops like millets, oil seeds and pulses, planning for short duration varieties of the main crop, planning for protective irrigation by efficient use of available water and promoting technical package of practices like direct sowing, less plant spacing, more seed rate etc.

Steps to increase production of foodgrains

3689. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether country needs to consider all options including genetically modified technology to increase wheat production which has been stagnant at an average 2.7 tonne per hectare for the past 6 years according to renowned agriculture scientist;

(b) if so, whether according to agriculture scientist country may be net importer of wheat by 2020 if the yields of grain remain stagnant; and

(c) how long will Government continue to ban export of wheat and rice and what steps have been taken and proposed to be taken to improve yield growth of wheat and rice in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is intended to increase the wheat production and productivity involving the latest tools and technologies available including those in biotechnology. Genetically modified technology although not used in wheat improvement for the moment, can also be utilized specially for specific trait improvement in accordance with the laws, rules, regulations of the country including those related with bio safety measures.

(b) With the advancement of technology and Government's policy to give emphasis on agricultural growth, the wheat production is not likely to be stagnant.

(c) The decision with regard to export of wheat and rice is taken in accordance with the need of the country and as per relevant rules, regulations and guidelines. Steps to enhance production and productivity of wheat and rice include; broadening of genetic base of varieties/hybrids biotechnological interventions such as gene pyramiding, marker aided selection for biotic, abiotic and quality traits, structural and functional genomics, resource conservation technologies, improving soil health, integrated pest management, use of hybrid rice technology and other policy interventions etc.

Investment in the fertilizer sector

3690. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new investments in the fertilizer sector have been made in the past five years;

(b) whether the proposed nutritional based subsidy regime scores over the prevailing product pricing regime; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) no new investments in fertilizer sector has been made in past five years. However, many of the existing urea units have taken up revamp of their existing units over last 1-2 years in view of the increasing demand-production gap of urea in the country and the pricing policy for new investments in urea sector announced by Government in September, 2008.

(b) and (c) Under the proposed nutrient based subsidy regime, the subsidy on fertilizer will be fixed on the basis of nutrients contained in the subsidized fertilizers. It is expected that nutrient based subsidy regime would encourage production and availability of innovative fertilizer products in the market at reasonable prices, which will lead to better agricultural productivity and consequently increased returns to the farmers. The unshackling of the fertilizer manufacturing sector is expected to attract fresh investments in this sector.

Justice to victims of Bhopal gas tragedy

†3691. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of success achieved in getting justice to the victims of Bhopal gas tragedy;

(b) whether efforts are being made to clean the land and ground water around the factory;

(c) the status of extradition of Anderson; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) In its judgment dated 14th and 15th February, 1989, the Supreme Court directed the Union Carbide to deposit US $ 470 millions as a settlement of all past, present and future claims. As a result of Supreme Court Order, Union Carbide Company deposited US $ 470 millions (420 million in US dollar and approximately Rs.69 crore in Indian rupees) in March, 1989. The process of giving compensation started in November, 1992. 10,29,517 cases were registered for compensation. All the cases have since been settled. Compensation has been awarded in 5,74,370 cases by the Welfare Commissioner who is a sitting judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court. An amount of Rs. 1549.04 crore has been

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.